

# Tensions in monitoring and evaluating children's participation

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# Monitoring and evaluating what?

- Measuring compliance by States with their obligations under the relevant CRC articles
- Measuring the actual participation that is taking place

# Monitoring States' compliance

- **Structural indicators** – laws and policies
- **Process indicators** – measures to implement laws and policies such as training, staff recruitment
- **Outcome indicators** – changes that take place in the realisation of participation rights

# Why measure States' compliance?

- To benchmark and track progress in the legislative and policy environment needed to promote and respect children's right to participation
- To enable children to hold adults to account
- To help identify priorities for action to strengthen child participation
- To improve reporting to relevant treaty bodies

# Tensions

- ▶ No agreement on what to measure – no recognised proxy indicators, structural, process or outcome, implementation of rights or well-being
- ▶ Difficult to construct universal indicators of relevance to different cultural, social and economic contexts
- ▶ Need to involve children in determining meaningful indicators
- ▶ Outcomes are often qualitative and therefore hard and costly to measure
- ▶ Outcomes often only measurable over the longer term

# Monitoring children's participation

- Scope of participation – at what point are children involved, at what level and which children
- Quality of participation – does the experience comply with the recognised ethical and quality requirements of participation
- Outcomes of participation - has children's participation resulted in the agreed objectives of their engagement – internal and external objectives

## Why measure participation

- To enable children to recognise their achievements
- To help them assess how participation could be strengthened
- To strengthen accountability to children
- *To respond to the governmental and donor demand for 'evidence-based' programmes*

# Tensions

- Participation a fundamental human right – not contingent on proving outcomes
- Process of claiming and advocating children’s civil rights can be comparable to a social movement - they achieve impact and change through accumulated activities, not individual projects
- Outcomes dependent on cultural, economic, social and political context
- Difficulties in attribution of change
- Challenges in identifying objectives and indicators at outset of initiatives
- Children central to process– but challenging for them to criticise adults